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Editorial

Robin Skeates

The General Editor

Durham University, UK

Welcome to the third issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* for 2015. Here, we present six general articles and nine book reviews. Below, I summarize and evaluate their significance to the archaeology of Europe.

Kathleen Sterling begins by reminding us, with reference to the work of scholars such as Meg Conkey, that Upper Palaeolithic cultural landscapes were composed of resources that were symbolically as well as economically meaningful. She then focusses on two cave sites (Enlène and Les Eglises) and an open-air chert procurement site (Peyre Blanque) occupied by mobile Magdalenian hunter-gatherers in the central French Pyrenees. Sterling argues that exotic raw materials might have been chosen, transported and used for stone tools at the caves not simply on account of their flaking properties but also as visually distinctive symbolic resources that expressed long-distance connections between people and places. In this way, sites and artefacts could have accrued significant place-value.

Next, in a surprisingly comparable study, Adam Nazaroff, Adnan Baysal, Yahya Çiftçi, and Keith Prufer thoughtfully combine a network approach with portable x-ray fluorescence analysis in order to assess the relative significance of three different chert resources located in the landscape surrounding the Turkish Neolithic site of Çatalhöyük. They note the long-term strength and resilience of connections with the Akdere source, whose valued chert was probably obtained indirectly through socially embedded long-distance trade. By contrast, they argue that the significance of the Sinanlı source, whose directly procured chert was used at Çatalhöyük for a range of relatively mundane tools and tasks, was more short-lived. This might have been because of a lack of analogous social connections supporting the Sinanlı source's consumption; because Sinanlı chert was replaceable by chert and radiolarite from other sources; because of a lack of other attractive resources in the landscape around the deposit; and because the nature of its (direct) procurement became an unsustainable component of an earlier way of life. Overall, this is an excellent study that is grounded in high quality primary data and engages with archaeological debates at local, regional and global levels.

Íñigo García-Martínez de Lagrán reviews current data and interpretations relating to the 'Neolithization' of the Iberian Peninsula, with particular reference to the development over time and space of different ceramic traditions (Iberian *Impressa*, Early Cardial, Classic Cardial, Epicardial). He then expresses his own position, which combines both the spread of small groups of Neolithic pioneer colonists and the active participation of indigenous Mesolithic groups in a variety of locally-specific scenarios. This seems like a step in the right direction, especially in terms of

responding to Robb and Miracle's (2007) challenge thrown down to scholars to establish more varied and complex accounts of these transitional societies.

On a similar theme but from a different perspective, Daniela Hofmann critically assesses the impact, potential and problems of ancient DNA data on models of the Mesolithic-Neolithic transition in central Europe. With population replacement around the beginning of the Neolithic a now more-or-less established fact, Hofmann calls for renewed attention to be given to the motivations and modes of the migration process, and for greater acknowledgement of the capabilities of immigrant Linearbandkeramik groups to behave in flexible and creative ways. More generally, she hopes that archaeologists and geneticists will collaborate more deeply, with the goal of enhancing our understanding of the connection between people's origins, their self-perceived identities, and material culture. In general, this article offers an important programmatic statement as we move forward to the next stage of research on the earliest farmers in central Europe.

In a rare but welcome contribution from Russia, Maria Ochir-Goryaeva presents the results of her new spatial analysis of Scythian monumental burial mounds (*kurgans*) and their mortuary deposits, distributed in the steppes of the northern Black Sea region. Paying particular attention to the 'royal' burial mounds dated to between the late fifth and late fourth centuries BC, she argues that the relative positioning of burials within the carefully planned mounds was strictly tied to Scythian conceptions of social order and cosmology. Generally, the burial of a male clan elder (or chief) was placed at the centre of the mound and at the greatest depth, their male relatives were then located along the principal East-West axis, and the leader's wife and other

relatives in the eastern part of the mound, while grave goods and lower status individuals were buried in the western part and at shallower depths. However, in a few deviant cases, this patterning was reversed. In addition, Ochir-Goryaeva argues that the East was perceived to be associated with the (favourable) world of the living and the West with the (unfavourable) realm of the dead.

Sarah Croix contributes to the on-going debate over the origins of urbanization in early medieval northern Europe by discussing whether or not the ‘marketplace’ of Ribe in Denmark was seasonal (as often claimed) or permanent. Based on her reassessment of the excavated material from Sct Nicolajgade 8, Croix argues in favour of the permanent character of at least parts of the marketplace from the beginning of the eighth century, on the basis of evidence for investment in urban planning at the time of the site’s foundation, for household activities such as textile working and cereal grinding, and for the presence of houses. By extension, she cautiously reinterprets eighth-century Ribe as a truly urban, permanently settled town.

We also have an excellent set of reviews of recently published books of relevance to European archaeology. Estella Weiss-Krejci, our Reviews Editor, commends a book offering new interpretations of European economic archaeology. Next come evaluations of three new books on the evidently thriving field of archaeometallurgy. Another book presents the biographies of nineteen, mostly German, female archaeologists. We then turn to an encyclopaedic volume that offers Polish speakers an overview of archaeological method and theory. The final four books deal with prehistory. Chris Scarre comments on the latest attempt to capture the breadth and complexity of prehistory on a global scale. Emiliano Bruner responds to a compilation

of essays dealing with the Social Brain Hypothesis, proposed by Robin Dunbar as an explanation for the fact that primates have unusually large brains for body size compared to all other vertebrates. There follows an edited volume that helps us recognise the significant variability of the Mesolithic-Neolithic transition in the Mediterranean. Finally, Liliana Spanedda offers a useful summary and commentary on the latest report on excavations at the important south-east Italian Bronze Age site of Coppa Nevigata.

If you are interested in submitting an article on any aspect of European archaeology, or have recently published a book that you would like us to review, do please get in touch with a member of our editorial team or visit us on <http://www.maney.co.uk/index.php/journals/eja/>.

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Robb, J. & Miracle, P. 2007. Beyond 'Migration' versus 'Acculturation': New Models for the Spread of Agriculture. In: A. Whittle & V. Cummings, eds. *Going Over: The Mesolithic-Neolithic Transition in North-West Europe*. Proceedings of the British Academy 144. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 99–115.